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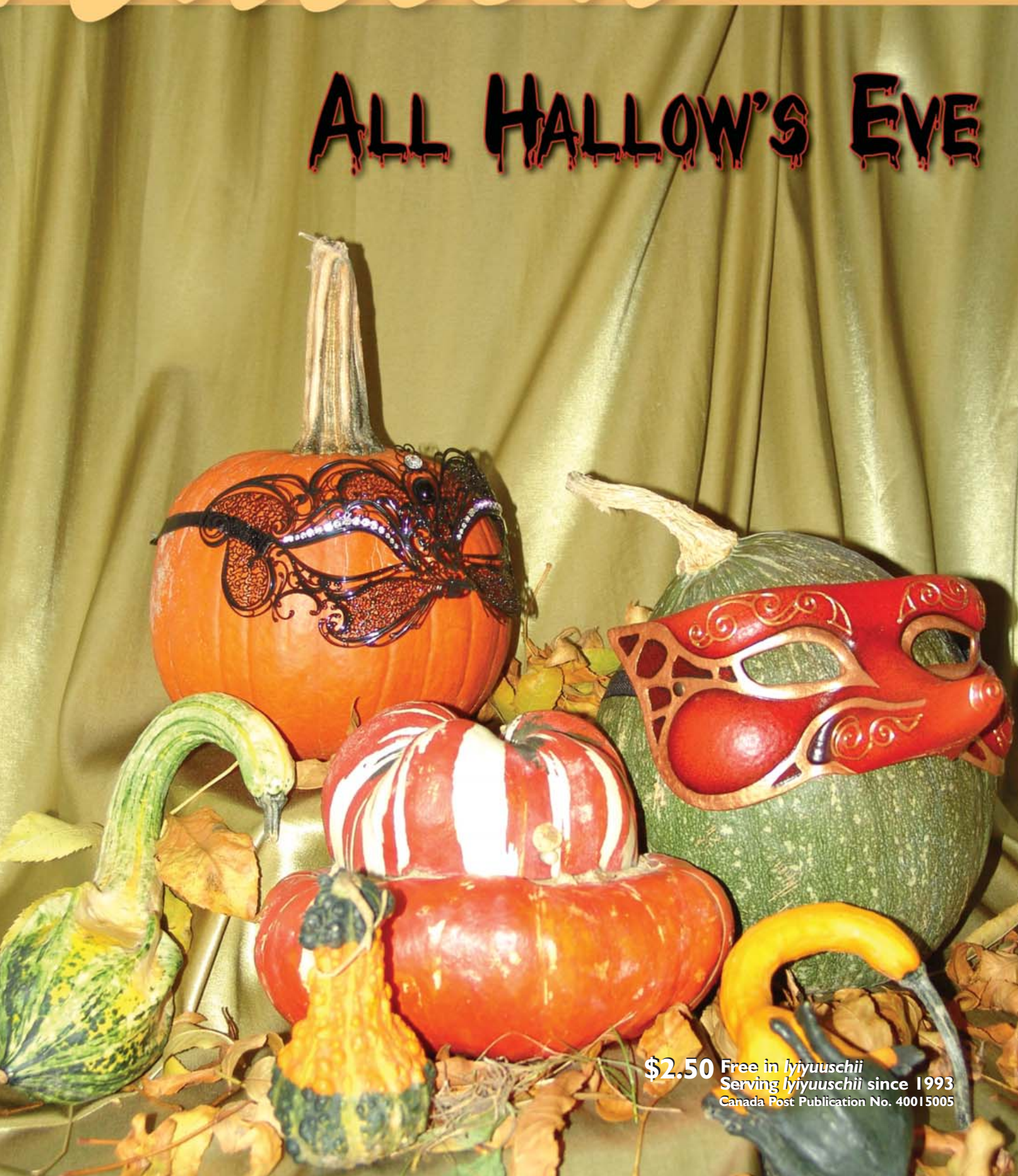

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Caribou and you

By Will Nicholls

Recently, a poll by Léger Marketing showed Quebecers felt it was important to protect endangered species.

It's an attitude the Crees know well. It's even one they have been a part of when the need was there. For example, in the 1940s the Cree and the Hudson Bay Company created beaver preserves. Non-Native trappers decimated the beaver populations. Crees trapped them and they were transported to beaver preserves and as the populations grew they were transplanted to other parts of Eeyou Istchee where they have healthy and sustainable populations to this day.

This hits close to home as Emmett MacLeod, my grandfather, was a Conservation Officer. With the willing assistance of tallymen a ban on caribou hunting was accepted by Crees for a period of 15 or so years in the Mistissini, Chibougamau and Nemaska regions until caribou herds regained a healthy and sustainable population. They had been overhunted by non-Natives and were in danger of disappearing from the area.

In the 1980s, Cree wouldn't shoot the Black Brant geese as they were endangered. Bill Namagoose remembers many around the hunting blind within range but swimming safely because of his and other Cree families' commitment to not only a principle of conservation but respect and concern for those they shared the land with.

In the early 1980s, Crees stopped hunting moose in Zone 22 of Eeyou Istchee because they were worried about the alarming lack of sightings of this food source.

This concern and historical tradition of conservation continues to this day. And Crees welcome the fact other Quebecers are concerned as well. The poll says 87-93% of all Quebecers believe the Quebec government should share information on the status of Woodland Caribou before making decisions about resource sharing in affected areas. Today most Quebecers believe that the province prioritizes economic development and jobs at the expense of the environment (63%).

Concerns over the Woodland Caribou are real. Quebec's own members of the expert committee think there are only three herds of Woodland Caribou left in Quebec. They estimate a population of 700 and believe for a herd to be sustainable you need at least 300. Getting this close to the limit is looking at an eleventh hour solution and none is in sight.

The Plan Nord is going to extend Route 167 and Quebec hasn't come up with a protection plan to save the herds. In fact, there is no protection plan within the territory of Eeyou Istchee and the other two herds are in the upper Broadback River area. Some say a little east and northward but little has been done to ensure their survival.

Bill Namagoose points out that the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement said when there are problems, sports hunting will be the first cutback followed by forestry. The second stage is Crees doing no more than subsistence hunting followed by no hunting at all by Crees when a species is endangered. Namagoose says the Grand Council of the Crees is calling for a moratorium on development activities in the affected areas until Quebec meets its obligations not only under the Agreement and the endangered species laws.

Now is the time to act and all residents of Quebec are looking at our government to do what is right, lawful and desired by everyone. Save the Woodland Caribou.

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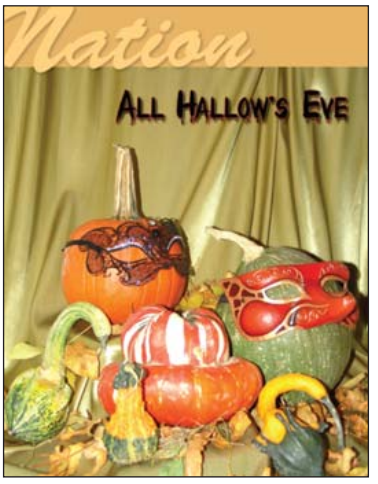

Halloooooweeee'een snippets

By Sonny Orr

One of the craziest times of the year is breathing down our necks like some rabid vampire who hasn't had a drop of blood in days. The skies overhead drip with snow-tinged blasts of air as children and adults brave the elements to go trick or treating from one spooky porch door to the next. Yes, it's that creepy time of the year again – Halloween.

The many painted faces, babies in cute bunny outfits, teens who look like Justin Bieber, scary hunchbacked ogres, sweet angels and plumped-out grannies crowd the stairwell to hell, some with nary a word, some using gestures to intimidate me to toss candies into their loot bags. Once in a while, the silent ones show up, never daring to reveal their identities, lest we recognize them and Facebook the world with their silly costumes.

Today, Halloween is almost over, given the fact that Christmas sales are already on television and in Walmart. One thing about Walmart, it's that no matter how hard you try, you cannot escape the doorman when you have freshly exited your cash register stall, bare seconds ago. (I know this is off topic, but it's leading somewhere.)

If only I had a costume the last time I tried to buy one at a local Walmart, and if only the doorman wore a police costume, then maybe the theatrics that many face at Walmart leaving with their piles of newly purchased goods would be more understandable and perhaps even more forgiving. But alas, this is not so. I wish that Walmart would just leave their customers alone after spending hours in their store, gratefully spending money for goods that aren't always available at home. At least some respect for the honest shopper, like a simple "Thanks for shopping here!" At least?

Well, back to Halloween and the mad dash to hide one's true looks with one that you physiologically wish you were. Now, the ones who cross dress are maybe actually hiding their true desires, while the ones who dress like vampires really wish they could just change into a bat and fly away, or perhaps it's the sucking of blood that turns them on. Maybe, those who dress like doctors actually have a hankering for a nurse or to be nursed. One time, I went dressed as the mythical keeper of lost socks, complete with dryer lint for hair and nearly all the socks I owned pinned to my good shirt might make many think that I actually like to do laundry, or have a tendency to sniff clothes fresh off a clothesline. But I beg to differ, I'm not like that at all… I think.

Weather wise, I forecast a hell of a Halloween, so make sure that you have some sweaters and long johns hidden under your veil of deception this time, as the skies will open up and cause a major icing on most highways and cancel any witch's plans for travel by broom or by airline or by any method, but don't say I didn't warn you. Beware the weatherman, he is disguised as a clever liar and will make you suffer if you believe him or not. But most of all, watch out for anyone driving around wearing a mask, as their visibility is hampered by their steamy breathing and beads of sweat, so they might just bump into something they normally wouldn't hit if dressed for driving. And watch out for bad rotten apples and razorblades. Booooo….

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Rookie of the year

CREECO's Quality Inn & Suites rewarded for its excellence

By Amy German

After only eight months of operation, Val-d'Or's Quality Inn & Suites, a joint venture between CREECO and Trahan Holdings, has already been awarded for outstanding performance and quality of service, beating out other hotels in the Choice Hotels Canada chains. According to the hotel's general manager, Michael Prince, every year during the Choice Hotels' fall conference, all 300 properties under Choice Hotels Canada have the opportunity to participate and enter their properties into different categories under the Awards for Property Excellence (APEX).

"As a new property we were allowed to enter into three different categories and of those three, we won two. One of the awards was for 'Rookie of the Year', a category which all new properties that have opened up under the Choice Hotels banner are eligible for," said Prince.

The Val-d'Or Quality Inn & Suites was in competition with every newly built or converted property within Choice Hotels, including other Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality Inn, Sleep Inn, Clarion, Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn banners, and came out on top to win the Rookie of the Year award.

According to Choice Hotels, this award goes to the property that has embraced Choice programs, demonstrated a passion to provide the best guest customer experience possible, and symbolizes the qualities expected of a hotelier within the Choice Hotels Canada system.

The hotel also picked up the "Spirit of Hospitality" award in the provincial division, after achieving high levels of guest satisfaction among the more than 60 Choice Hotels in Quebec.

"You have to look at the fact that we have a really beautiful property here and for a mid-scale hotel, the price-to-quality ratio is very good. Then we have a staff that has banded together in a very short period – it's only been eight months since we opened. Not only do they enjoy their work, but they do everything that they can since they are committed to the satisfaction of the clientele," said Prince.

According to Prince, he couldn't have a better staff and explained that the hotel staff actually goes through all of the client comments on a weekly basis. If there's been an issue, the staff has been quick to find a solution so that the situation doesn't repeat itself again.

"The result is that we have shown that we can really do this to the best of our abilities. The outcome is winning the prize for customer satisfaction," said Prince.

And, it was actually the hotel's guests who were responsible for seeing that the establishment was rewarded for its efforts. According to Choice Hotels, customers are regularly surveyed about their experience at each establishment. The company uses a combination of survey answers to determine the likelihood that a past guest will recommend the hotel to family and friends, showing their satisfaction with the establishment.

The Val-d'Or Quality Inn & Suites actually managed to garner the most "likelihood to recommend" votes from its clientele during the qualification period, earning it top prize.

According to Prince, having business giants like CREECO and Trahan Holdings as the hotel's shareholders also contributes to the success of the business because they are so experienced when it comes to large operations like airlines and hotels.

"They have made sure that they have a good team in place and, more importantly, they give the tools to the team to make sure it can operate in a professional manner. It is to their merit that it's easy for us to decide right away as to whether we should cut back on one thing or do another thing right from the beginning," said Prince.

Winning these two awards has also made for yet another moment of Cree pride and yet another symbol of Cree success, according to Rodney W. Hester, Vice-President of the hotel's Board of the Shareholders and the Business Development Coordinator for CREECO.

"This is a great honour for the Crees of Eeyou Istchee. We share this achievement with our business partners and all of our shareholders, which includes each and every beneficiary of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. This is yet another example of how CREECO has become a shining example of success," said Hester.

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Planning ahead for the needy

Projets Autochtones du Québec tackles new plans at its annual assembly

By Akiva Levitas

On October 5, Projets Autochtones du Québec (PAQ) held its annual general assembly at the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal. The PAQ is a not-for-profit organization that focuses on combating the issue of homelessness amongst its First Nations, Métis and Inuit members in Montreal.

In the upcoming year PAQ will face numerous obstacles that it needs to overcome. Not only will it be redefining its mission statement but PAQ needs to find a new home since its current location on de la Gauchetière will be demolished in 2013.

PAQ was established in 2003 as a research organization but over the years it has developed into a homeless shelter for the Native community. Currently, it offers 52 beds and provides basic services such as food, clothing and cultural activities. But its main focus is on reintegrating the homeless back into society and giving them the tools to establish a more stable lifestyle.

Presiding over this year's general assembly was William John, who was joined by President Joey Saganash as well as board members Arlene Cross and Adrianne Campbell along with Isabelle Richard, who is in charge of the relocation project.

The main order of business was a proposal to change PAQ's mission statements, and to elect five new members to the board of directors.

The first item was brought up by Campbell, who proposed a change to the mission statement and objectives. "The constitution was made years ago when PAQ was a research project but now the mission and objectives need to be updated to reflect our goal to receive charitable organization status," said Campbell. She proposed a clarified and expanded version of the bylaws to have a better chance.

This proposed change also reflects where PAQ is headed. Its new goals are to provide reintegration to Quebec society while promoting First Nations culture. One of its priorities is to establish urban social-adaptation programs which will focus on the mental, spiritual and physical health of the homeless. This program is currently being developed with the cooperation of McGill University but now it is only in the planning stage.

PAQ is run mainly by volunteers who contribute their time and effort to help people change their lives around. The board of directors took a pause from the agenda to thank all those who have volunteered over the years. "The lengths volunteers go through in order to get things done is amazing," said Campbell. She described the community spirit that runs through the PAQ and its volunteers who go above and beyond for their troubled brothers and sisters.

Next up was the relocation issue, presented by Richard. When PAQ first started it only had 15 available beds, now it can have up to 40 emergency beds if needed. Since its lease of the current building is up in April 2012, the issue of finding new digs is becoming urgent. "With the contracts ending soon, it is a critical time for PAQ to find a new location," Saganash said.

For the most part, the buildings which they have looked at so far have been rejected for various reasons. Some aren't big enough, others can't be rented long-term or the price is too high and one even has a zoning problem.

The purpose of the new building will be to provide more beds but also to incorporate the transition rooms. These rooms will be rented for periods of around three months with the goal of providing enough stability to help the homeless reintegrate into society. At first, the goal is to have around 10 transition rooms to test out how it will work. And yes, they will have kitchens and all the things necessary to provide stability.

Up until now, PAQ has enjoyed not paying for rent thanks to the city of Montreal. But with the uncertainty of the relocation, PAQ has had to consider the costs of rent which would add another $100,000 to its already tight budget. This is the reason why PAQ needs to get its charity status so that it can get donations from major corporations who would gladly give in return for a tax receipt.

Finally, it came to the part that everyone was waiting for – the elections for the board of directors. Since the board needed five new members and with only five candiates were nominated, a vote wasn't necessary. The new members are William John, Devon Johnny, Alan Harington, Lewis Haynes and Bret Pinneault.

The work that PAQ and its volunteers put in is invaluable to the Native community in Montreal and in Quebec. Next year is going to be one of great change for PAQ and with the help of its volunteers 2012 could become the organization's defining year.

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Ouje elects a new Chief and council

On September 29, the community of Oujé-Bougoumou went to the polls to elect a new Chief and Council resulting in a win for Reggie Neeposh, who is the community's new Chief, and Randy Bosum, the Deputy Chief.

Neeposh came out on top with 183 votes, beating out Anthony Hughboy who had 119 and incumbent Chief Louise Wapachee who garnered a mere 57.

For Deputy Chief, Randy Bosum won with 116 votes, beating out Gaston Cooper who had 103, Karl Simard who had 73 and Kenny Mianscum who received 66 votes.

Also elected to Council in this election were: Abel Bosum, Sam R. Bosum, Margaret M. Cooper, Rosie Rabbitskin and Curtis Bosum.

Congratulations to all of Oujé's new Band Council members.

Poachers convicted for hunting on Category II lands

According to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife, on August 31, two men from Val David were convicted on charges of poaching and sentenced to fines totaling $8400.

The charges stem from when the two, Pascal Rondeau and Jean-Guy St-Denis, were caught hunting last February on Category II lands near Mistissini.

An investigation was carried out by game wardens from Eastmain, resulting in the two men being charged with four counts related to hunting big game or caribou. Those charges include hunting big game without a license, driving in a prohibited area, unlawful possession of large game and hunting on lands reserved for the Aboriginals without the consent of the community.

Along with having to pay fines totaling $4200 each as well as court costs, Rondeau and St-Denis will not be able to obtain a hunting license for a period of 24 months and the meat they were in possession of at the time was seized.

The Ministry wishes to remind the public that poaching is a highly illegal offense. If you or anyone you know suspects that poaching is happening within Cree territory, please contact SOS Poaching at 1-800-463-2191.

AFN withdraws from missing women inquiry

The Assembly of First Nations is the latest group to withdraw from the British Columbia Missing Women's Commission of Inquiry in Vancouver for the victims of serial killer Robert Pickton.

According to National Grand Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, the AFN feels that it can no longer participate because of the limitations of the inquiry itself and an imbalance and inequity in legal resources made available to the parties.

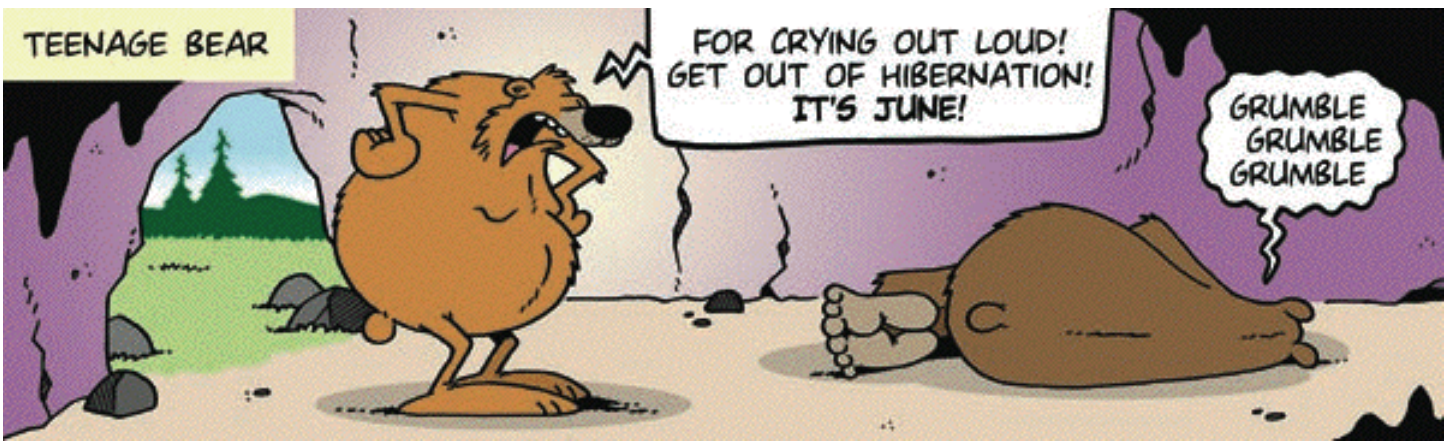
"The principle objectives behind AFN's participation from the beginning have been to support the families, to bring to light systemic issues that gave rise to these tragedies and finally to identify efforts toward resolution of those issues," said Atleo.

"We hoped the inquiry would shed light to uncover truths that could help with the healing process for the families as well as to begin to point the way forward so that all women and the most vulnerable have access to justice. Without equity and balance, systemic issues will not be brought forward and will therefore not be reflected in the recommendations of the Inquiry," added Atleo.

The AFN's announcement comes one week after Vancouver's Women's Memorial March Committee and the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre pulled out from the inquiry, despite the fact that they too were granted full status. The two groups have joined a boycott of the Commission as, without funding for legal representation from the government, they cannot actually participate.

While the provincial government is funding 14 lawyers representing the police and government, they were only willing to shell out for an additional two to represent the families of the 18 women.

Comic strip courtesy of Tundra Comics: www.tundracomics.com



Hellbent on Halloween

The Nation's guide to costumes, party planning and more

By Amy German

Whether you've already ordered Halloween costumes online for the whole family or are still planning out the ultimate in costume craziness to outdo your neighbours, that spooky season is once again right around the corner and it's time to get cracking.

What is Halloween about if not the costumes and setting a spooky scene for a night of fun? In this vein, the Nation has searched high and low for fun and innovative suggestions to make Halloween 2011 the most memorable ever.

While the big thing in the communities is to order costumes off the internet weeks in advance to ensure that they arrive on time and are good to go by the beginning of October, not everyone is as organized or can find exactly what they want online.

For those willing to go it one step further and hit a major city centre like Montreal to pick up top-of-the-line ghoulish gear, spook-tacular disguises and the latest in electronic animatronics geared at scaring even the most seasoned Halloween fan, read on. The Nation has found some of the coolest, craziest and over-the-top items to trick out your Halloween and put it over the edge.

Going Medieval

Since we are not experts when it comes to costumes, the Nation decided to check out two very unique stores in Montreal to see what kinds of exclusive goods you could acquire to make this Halloween one for the record books.

For those looking to buy anything along the lines of medieval gear, such as clothing, swords, armour, helmets and just about anything that could trick out a Lord of the Rings/ Game of Thrones/ Army of Darkness (minus the chainsaw) look, look no further than Dracolite Medieval Boutique.

Sure, the items available in this shop are rather pricy as they are considered "clothing" instead of "costumes" but if you want a foam-type sword that looks authentic enough for a movie set and is safe enough for a child to use -- this is the place that has it all. They also carry real swords of all sorts for big boys and girls too (very sharp and very dangerous.)

"We have a lot of LARP (Live Action Role Playing) products since we have a lot of customers who like to get together to do this. It is like Dungeons & Dragons in that it is an adventure but people will actually use these items for fighting.

"We sell a lot of these kinds of LARP products for Halloween because they are much safer than real blades or even wooden blades," said manager Simon Charron.

Special for Halloween, the boutique brings in a whole line of handmade high-end leather masks from Nathalie Pirate who previously made similar items for the Cirque de Soleil as well as a whole line of intricate traditional Venetian ball masks, both of which are featured on the Nation's cover this week.

Charron said Pirate makes two lines of masks -- historical ones that would have been used in theatre over the centuries and which are predominantly red, and then a series of animal-themed ones.

The one featured on the cover with the long nose actually dates back to the Black Plague era and is known as a "Plague Doctor's Mask" because a doctor of that time would have put herbs or medicines behind it to breathe in while treating sick patients.

For those looking for a different look, Dracolite had a wide selection of masks with Celtic, armour, skull and animal themes as well as a series of other unique creations.

"The Venetian masks that we carry; these were worn traditionally to grand balls. The ones we carry are made of metal and Swarovski crystals and they are rather pricy. You can get a lot of cheap copies at costume stores for about $20 but these are high-end. You won't find the same shapes or the same quality as these," said Charron.

Within the store, Dracolite had a number of different Venetian masks, some adorned with many Swarovski crystals and in a variety of themes from cat to butterfly.

Were anyone to invest in either of these pricy masks, we suggest that later on they be used for home décor as they are so unique and stunning that it would be a shame to see them collect dust in a closet.

For more info:
http://bijouxmedievaux.com

All out Halloween A-Z

For those unsure of what they want to go with or those who are looking for a specific type of prosthetic nose, a licensed TV/movie character costume, a mask featuring any one of the last four American presidents or anything else that could fall under this category, look no further than Montreal's Johnny Brown Theatrical Accessories.

Having been in the business of costumes and costume accessories for either special occasions or the theatre for many years, Johnny Brown manager André Secheur said Halloween has become a far less predictable affair when it comes to forecasting what will be big every year.

"About 20 or 30 years ago people would go with what they saw on TV or in the movies. So you would get a lot of Supermans or whatever because that's what they saw and they would go with it.

"Today what happens is that we get people who come in and already have their own ideas of what they want to do. You won't see 200-300 Supermans or Batmans anymore; there is a lot more variety in the characters now," said Secheur.

For those interested in donning a mask as their favourite superhero or movie monster, Johnny Brown has an incredible selection. Lining the walls like trophies were masks for two different kinds Hulk masks (one high-end, one low-end), Spiderman, the clown from It, an alien, Darth Vader and Catwoman, just to name a few.

On another wall the store featured a series of form-fitting masks meant to appear more like human skin and these were available in the form of Hillary and Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, George W. Bush, JFK and then some creepy guy who looks like the Emperor from Star Wars, but perhaps they are predicting the next president here.

"People really like these because they are very funny," said Secheur

In terms of buying costumes and accessories, the selection was just about limitless. Not only was there just about every kind of packaged costume for those who are on the market for an Alice in Wonderland, angel, devil, cowboy or any other run-of-the-mill type of outfit but for those looking to construct their own there was plenty to get inspired by. The store had every type of priest hat available including sombreros, top hats, police hats, gladiator masks as well as a wide variety of ethnic garb. There were also a wide variety of rubber animal masks for those looking to dress up like a bunny, puppy, chicken and just about everything else in the barnyard and beyond.

For those looking to go all out as a mascot, for $300-350 there were brand-new confections that could be purchased in the form of dogs, lions and other animals that could later on be used for a sports team mascot.

For those looking to go really creative when it comes to creating a one-of-a-kind look, Johnny Brown is Montreal's go-to place for latex prosthetics and feature an incredible

selection when it comes to horns, ears, noses, chins and other prosthetic pieces.

Once more, as Secheur explained, these latex pieces are incredibly versatile as with just a little bit of oil-based make-up (available in store) your new nose can be the perfect shade of green, blue, pink or whatever else you fancy.

Specialty Items for the Home

While dressing one's self up is part of the whole process, for those looking to really dress up the home in a spook-tacular fashion, this store had a series of animatronics (mechanized props) that even had us creeped out.

While the store had a whole graveyard full of life-sized ghosts, ghouls and zombies as well as tombstone props, some of the animated props really stood out. They included an old witch holding a cat that meows and screams, massive spring-out-and-recoil spider in webs (that will make anyone pee their pants), screeching and menacing clowns, a zombie-like old lady in a rocking chair that rocks.

There are also smaller animatronic items like zombie hands that could be set up anywhere and freak out just about anyone.

And, what haunted house would be complete without boundless fog to set that creepy vibe? For those looking to get their fog on, Johnny Brown also offers machines that will pump foggy goodness into the air or keep it down low for a ground fog look. With machines retailing for well under $100, there is years of fog-making magic in store for anyone who takes home one of these puppies.

For more info:
www.johnnybrowninc.com

For the Do-It-Yourselfers

For those who can't make it down south to go on a Halloween shopping spree or those who are just into good, old-fashioned homemade fun, here are a few suggestions that we found online that will make for some awesome thrills and chills.

Balloon Ghosts

You can make some simple and spooky ghosts from balloons, old bed sheets or white fabric of your choosing and fishing line, string or twine.

First, inflate the balloons and tie the piece of string to them long enough to affix it to whatever you are going to use such as an outdoor hanging light or whatever else you may choose. Next, cut a small hole through the middle of your fabric or bed sheet to lace your string through and voila, instant ghost.

You can also use markers to decorate your ghosts and this is something that the kids can enjoy participating in.

Beastly Footprints

To give trick-or-treaters the impression that something monster-like has recently visited your home, try using washable paint to make these easy-to-do footprints on your steps and sidewalk.

First, draw monster-like footprints onto paper and then cut them out. Next, use your cut-out to trace the image onto a sponge or simply cut around the footprint using either scissors or an exacto knife. Next, pour washable paint into a pan and then use either side of the sponge to create left and right footprints leading up to your door.

Mason Jar Lanterns

You can easily create spooky images on your walls and outside of your home using mason jars, black construction paper and either twinkle-lights or tea lights.

First, select your jars and find paper that will fit well enough around them to cover the jar. Next, using scissors or an exacto knife, cut out the images you would like to project onto the walls or have shining through your jars. Next, simply tape your paper around your jar from the exterior and add either a twinkle-light or his old-school cousin, the tea light. These lights work similar to jack-o-lanterns but with a lot less mess.

Snowy December will be upon us before you know it!

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Cardboard/Styrofoam Graveyard

If you really want to spook-out your front yard, there is no better way to do so than by adding your own do-it-yourself graveyard. Naturally not everyone has a series of headstones hanging around the house but you can always make your own by cutting out tombstones from old appliance boxes, Styrofoam or blue foam insulation.

Once cut out, spray paint them black and then paint the names on them. Adding the names can be especially fun with the help of kids who will often like to come up with silly names for the tombstones.

Haunted House Window Treatment

Never to be outdone, Martha Stewart came up with the ultimate in haunted house-crafts gear for this year in her Martha Stewart Halloween magazine. If you are really looking to go all of the way with decorating the exterior of your home for the big night, Stewart brilliantly suggested making cardboard "wooden boards" to board up the windows of your home.

To do this, all you need to do is simply cut out horizontal boards to go across your windows from cardboard so that you have a four or five for each window, mimicking the look of old-fashioned wooden boards to board up a home. The boards will need to be just a few inches longer than the width of your windows so that you can adhere the boards with double-sided tape, a staple gun, tacks or tiny nails.

To add to this effect, in the home she displays, each of the windows in the home with uniform orange window coverings applied from the outside so that very little activity or furnishings can be seen from the outside, adding to the haunted-house effect.

Whatever you decide to adorn yourself or your home with, on behalf of the Nation, have a safe and happy Halloween!

National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation

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Six years on and still burning at both ends

2011 vigil coverage and how the movement has changed over the years

By Amy German

October 4 is no longer just a day when Canada's Aboriginal peoples bow their heads to mourn the loss of over 582 documented missing/murdered Native women as larger portions of the nation are mourning with them.

Despite this, the number of victims is increasing and we may never see an actual count of them all.

Six years ago, Bridget Tolley, an Anishnabe woman from the Kitigan Zibi reserve, began a movement marking a day for vigils across Canada to remember and honour all of the Aboriginal women who had been lost, never to be seen again and often without justice.

Tolley's mother is one of them and the vigils are held on the anniversary of her death. Gladys Tolley was killed while walking home along the highway through her reserve when she was tragically struck by a Sûreté du Québec cruiser that had apparently been speeding.

According to Tolley, justice was never served in her mother's case because the investigation into the tragic death was botched at best and after a decade of pushing for an inquiry, nothing has happened.

This is what brought Tolley to the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), begging for assistance and support as she felt alone in her struggle.

Fortunately, Tolley was able to get help from NWAC's Sisters in Spirit (SIS) Initiative, a special team under the association that the federal government was providing funding for over a five-year period to research how many Aboriginal women had gone missing and why the justice system had failed them in so many instances.

This was particularly exemplified in the case of Robert Pickton, the serial killer who had killed almost 50 women from Vancouver's Downtown Lower Eastside, many of whom were Aboriginal.

It was in Tolley's mother's name that the vigils began but in the last six years the movement has taken on its own life with over 83 Canadian cities participating in the annual event with other special events happening in conjunction with the vigils.

The annual Montreal event brought Tolley back to the city for the sixth annual event held by a growing number of supporters.

As evening fell, several hundred supporters clamoured around a monument in Cabot Square to hear speeches by Tolley, her friend Sue Martin, whose daughter was murdered, as well as other speakers and members of the recently formed group, Families of Sisters in Spirit.

Tolley explained a little bit about this to the crowd when she took the megaphone.

"I am the founder of the SIS movement. We are here tonight to honour and remember our missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Last year, the government took away the funding for the SIS initiative at the NWAC.

"We just can't let this go however. These are our sisters in spirit and we want to continue to honour and remember them. When the government took the money away from NWAC, we as families started Families of SIS. We as families continue to fight every day with-

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out funding from anyone and so we are not going to sit around and wait for NWAC or anyone to get their funding."

In 2010, after earmarking $10 million to go into addressing the issue of Canada's missing/murdered Aboriginal women, the Canadian government decided to strip NWAC of all of its research dollars, promptly handing over the sum to the RCMP to carry out the task of handling the situation. Some of that funding went to form a new database, despite the fact that SIS had created one that allowed for all of the specific details and cultural references to remain relevant and show how these important facts contributed to each situation. The new RCMP database would no longer be for just Aboriginal women but everyone in Canada and a portion of that funding also went to a wiretapping program. New numbers on murdered and missing Aboriginal women have not since been reported despite the fact that new cases have been in the media.

In light of this and the fact that the federal government has also called for NWAC to drop the name Sisters in Spirit as they felt it had developed a negative image for Canada, a division was born between the NWAC movement and the families of the victims.

The Families of Sisters in Spirit held their own vigil on Parliament Hill on October 4 at noon with over 300 supporters and several New Democratic Party MPs to rally the federal government for change. Hours later, during the evening NWAC held their own event.

Montreal journalist and CKUT radio host Irkar Beljaars was one of the speakers on Parliament Hill for the Families of SIS vigil and told the Nation that it was one of the most powerful he had ever been to.

"I definitely feel as though the message is penetrating with the NDP. They were there and showed up with several MPs. Gatineau MP Françoise Boivin, the NDP critic for the Status of Women said they were there to 'Kick some Conservative ass!'"

Holding a photograph of her daughter Terrie Anne Martin-Dauphenais, Sue Martin took the megaphone and talked about the special ceremony that the Families of SIS held over Dauphenais' ashes while on Parliament Hill that day.

"Today was a hard day for each and every one of us family members as today I took my daughter's ashes to Parliament Hill and did a sacred ceremony to give her release from this world so that she can be free from pain," explained Martin.

As she began to speak about her daughter, Martin was hassled by some of the Native street people who often spend their days drinking in Cabot Square. They had decided to participate in the event that day, lending an even more serious tone to the event as some were visibly inebriated and one woman was sporting two black eyes. Martin later told the Nation that she could never be angry with these women as she felt that they too were victims of this government.

Responding to the women who were shouting at her with patience, Martin carried on, telling her story and making her plea to the public.

"This is not easy. I have been doing this for six years and this has been one of the hardest days because it was very personal as I have brought my child's remains with me. Today is the last time I will ever touch her remains as they will now be sent to Calgary, so that she can be buried with her older sister, Sherri.

"I don't want another family to feel what we are feeling as this is a life

continued on page 22

Tiffany Morrison

Meanwhile in the rest of the province, other events were held to honour and remember the missing and murdered women.

Earlier on that day, the family of Tiffany Morrison unveiled a special memorial for their daughter whose remains were found in the woods just outside of her home community of Kahnawake in the summer of 2010. Morrison was last seen in a taxi on her way home from a Montreal bar in 2006, her murder remains unsolved.

The new memorial was placed just yards away from where Morrison's remains were found, on the side of a newly created bike path. It consists of three small walls made of piled stones and a plaque featuring Morrison's face and story.

"The three-sided wall was something that I came up with because I didn't want it to be a boxed gravesite. I figured that this way, with the three walls and turned sideways, it is as though we are holding her.

"The plaque is there to remind people that she was a person, not just a story or a statistic so that people can relate to us more. It was donated to us by Beesum Communications," said Melanie Morrison, Tiffany's sister.

Despite the sadness that has surrounded this story, Morrison said that creating the memorial site has been a wonderful experience as it has brought out so many generous community members who have given their time and money to help the memorial become a reality.

"It has given my parents a sense of relief in that they know her site is always going to be there so that our family members can go there to be close to her. For us, this is where her spirit is because of what happened to her. Her remains may be in the cemetery but she will walk there until such time that she gets justice served. This has made them so much happier than they have been in a very long time and this is what I wanted," said Morrison.

At the same time, Morrison said there hadn't been much movement in her sister's case since the discovery of her remains and she wanted to remind the public that there is a $10,000 reward for any information that leads to the arrest of the person responsible for Tiffany's death.

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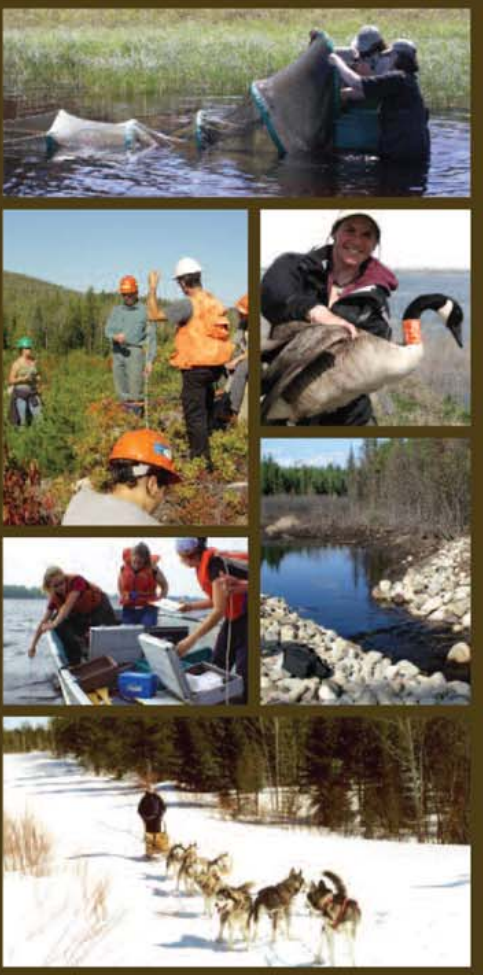

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For more information on the Natural Environment Technology Program, please contact:

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For more information on the upcoming tour please contact your local Niskamoon coordinator!

sentence. We have to live with this pain each and every day," said Martin.

Speaking for the first time in Montreal, Pamela Hillier took the megaphone to talk about her own experience, having more recently joined the ranks of Families of SIS, having lost her 16-year-old daughter Hillary Bonnel. She was joined at the megaphone while holding hands with her five-year-old son.

"My daughter Hillary was 16 when she went missing. This happened two years ago on September 5. She was found on November 13, buried in the woods.

"The man who did this to my daughter had been released from prison, after violently raping the mother of his children. He was not rehabilitated. Why was he let out?

"Some people cannot be rehabilitated. We have to protect our women and our children and keep them safe.

"Value your daughters, your mothers, your sisters, your aunts, your grandmothers. Value them because you never know when they are going to be taken away from you," said Hillier.

As vigil participants began to march from Cabot Square, down St. Catherine Street to Phillips Square where more speeches would take place and candles would be lit for the missing/murdered, Tolley spoke privately with the Nation.

She explained that indeed there is now a division between the families and NWAC as, due to pressure from the government not to use the name Sisters in Spirit, Tolley and the other families had formed their own group to support each other and continue their own fight despite their lack of funding.

She explained that after NWAC had lost their funding, the families had asked for the backing of NWAC at a series of different marches and events that took place throughout the year but NWAC President Jeannette Corbiere Lavell had told them no.

Tolley said that after refusing to give the families their support for marching events in December and in February, when NWAC finally put on an event in July, the families were told they could not participate.

"I felt I had been slapped in face. How can the families of these women not lead or take part in a march for the murdered and missing Aboriginal women? We are the ones who fight every day and it isn't just about whether we are being funded or not. This is something ongoing that is part of our lives.

"We asked them again if we could be a part of this march and once again they simply refused," said Tolley.

It is for this reason that the families now have their own movement.

Tolley said they had met earlier that day with several MPs in Ottawa to plead for more funding to support the families in Eastern Canada as they don't get any help and the families feel that NWAC isn't fighting for them anymore.

"It is very hard on a family to be alone and this was what I don't like. What really hurts me is when I turn on the TV to see that yet another girl has gone missing and there is a grandmother looking for her. You know, grandmas don't (necessarily) know that much about computers and they can't always go out and put posters up and there is this poor woman asking for support on TV. It just kills me when I see that kind of thing," said Tolley.

Chibougamau

Over in Eeyou Istchee, Chibougamau had its own, albeit small, vigil for the missing and murdered.

The Chibougamau Eenou Friendship Centre (formerly the Cree Indian Centre of Chibougamau) held an early evening event just outside of their facility for those interested, unfortunately only a handful of people showed up.

"We were really hoping for a larger turnout obviously but it is important that it was held regardless as to how many people were there. I am happy for those that were there and that we still had the event," said coordinator Wendy Maloff.

Still, Maloff said it was incredibly important to hold a vigil on October 4 because there is a need in the north to attention to the fact that violence against Aboriginal women is still an issue and still needs to be addressed.

At the same time, Maloff said in recent weeks she had been told by some members of the community that they didn't feel a vigil was necessary because violence against women isn't that big of a deal in the north and so Maloff felt the need to go ahead with the vigil to bring this misconception into light.

"I don't know if this is a lack of information or a denial thing. Some people don't want to talk about it so they would like to pretend that it hasn't happened up here," said Maloff.

Within the Cree communities alone, two women have been murdered in recent years – Minnie Natachequan of Whapmagoostui whose life was taken along with her two young sons at the hands of her former partner in 2008 and 16-year-old Tara Joly of Waskaganish who was murdered in 2009.

Their names remain part of the SIS's documented 582.

Occupy the media

By Lyle Stewart

I had the privilege today of giving a media workshop to an august and vitally important group: a couple dozen members of a welfare-and-housing-rights group in Montreal called Project Genesis.

Now, members of this "elite" don't belong to the economic elite, of course. Many probably eke out a survival on an income of a few hundred dollars a month.

But, against all odds, they are becoming part of a select group. They are choosing to address the economic injustice they know intimately in a manner that is not rooted in narrow self-interest. Despite the daily obstacles these folks face with quiet dignity – many are elderly, female and belong to visible and linguistic minorities – they have chosen to come out of the long shadows of poverty to say we all deserve much better. That's a tough argument to make in today's cynical, corporate-driven media environment.

And let's face it: it's not easy to be an effective media communicator. Even for someone with an expensive post-secondary education, a good income and the status that comes with an impressive, professional career. So imagine what it's like for people with none of those advantages and who have never been treated with respect by the rest of our society, especially the media. It takes great courage to step into the spotlight and demand a hearing.

So we discussed strategies on how best to do just that. We practiced, rehearsed, role-played and debated how to get across an unpopular message (unpopular, that is, to those who currently guard access to mass media) that promotes economic justice. More specifically, why decent housing is not only a basic right but also a public good. It was a rewarding exercise. I could see people gaining confidence, the confidence to tell their stories in an effort to demand something better for their neighbours and their children. This in itself is a great victory.

Helping give voice to the voiceless is a thrill. But when you see this little exercise in the context of the historical moment we are living, when you know that thousands of these meetings are taking place simultaneously around the world, it's exhilarating.

Think of it. We are not alone. Across the globe, people from all walks of life on every continent are choosing to say, "enough is enough" in a concerted fashion.

In a couple days, for instance, I'm going to take a few of my older kids down to Square Victoria, beside the Montreal Stock Exchange Tower, for a protest demonstration that will be cascading through dozens of the world's major cities the same day, with the same message. Hopefully you will have read about it or seen a television news report on it by the time this issue is published. As you may have gathered, this is important to me. I rarely involve my children in my activist life. The last time I did so was in February 2003, when I brought my then eight-year-old daughter to the massive, 150,000-strong protest march in Montreal against potential Canadian involvement in the imminent US-led invasion of Iraq (which went ahead, though without Canadian forces, the following month). It was a life experience for her and it enabled me to explain some of the realities of our world. We still speak of that event from time to time.

This time, I will take my now 16-year-old daughter and some of her younger brothers to the Montreal version of the Occupy Wall Street protest that took root a month ago in New York City. It was initially ignored in a blanket media blackout. But this movement is finally giving voice to the legitimate rage over the rampant corporate greed and the political corruption in the US that is destroying America's economy and democracy.

Internationally, it is spreading like a wildfire because this nightmare is universal. We must all join together to oppose the corporate destruction of our economy, our environment and our democratic rights.

And I want my kids to witness this moment firsthand. Maybe, years later in a history class, they will remember this experience and develop a deeper understanding of the forces that shape our lives. Or even be inspired to help improve the lives of others.

This is key, because one thing we can count on is that most of the mainstream media voices here will echo the dismissive, insulting and ignorant coverage that the Occupy Wall Street movement has received over the past weeks in the US. Recognizing this fact should redouble the determination for those of us who step forward to concentrate on our message and our motivations. We are in for rough treatment.

Political comedian Jon Stewart of the always-insightful Daily Show nailed it on how the media has addressed the Occupy Wall Street activists camping out in New York's financial district. The coverage dial has gone directly from "blackout" to "crisis", Stewart explained. Of course, those are the only two tonal settings the US media has these days, he added.

As if on cue, consider the CBC, Canada's allegedly "left-wing" state-funded broadcaster, which has piled on to the bandwagon of hatred for the people willing to challenge the status quo. Anyone who may have clicked on the interview by CBC host Kevin O'Leary with an Occupy Wall Street demonstrator (it has gone viral on social media) has a prime Canadian example of blatant and disgusting media bias.

The supposed professional journalist – O'Leary – had nothing but ignoramus insults to offer, while the "guest" of the program – Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Chris Hedges – successfully struggled to maintain his dignity while offering up intelligent and thoughtful explanations for what drives this spontaneous uprising.

In other words, they will first try to ignore you. Then they attack your credibility in the most hysterical fashion. Then we win.

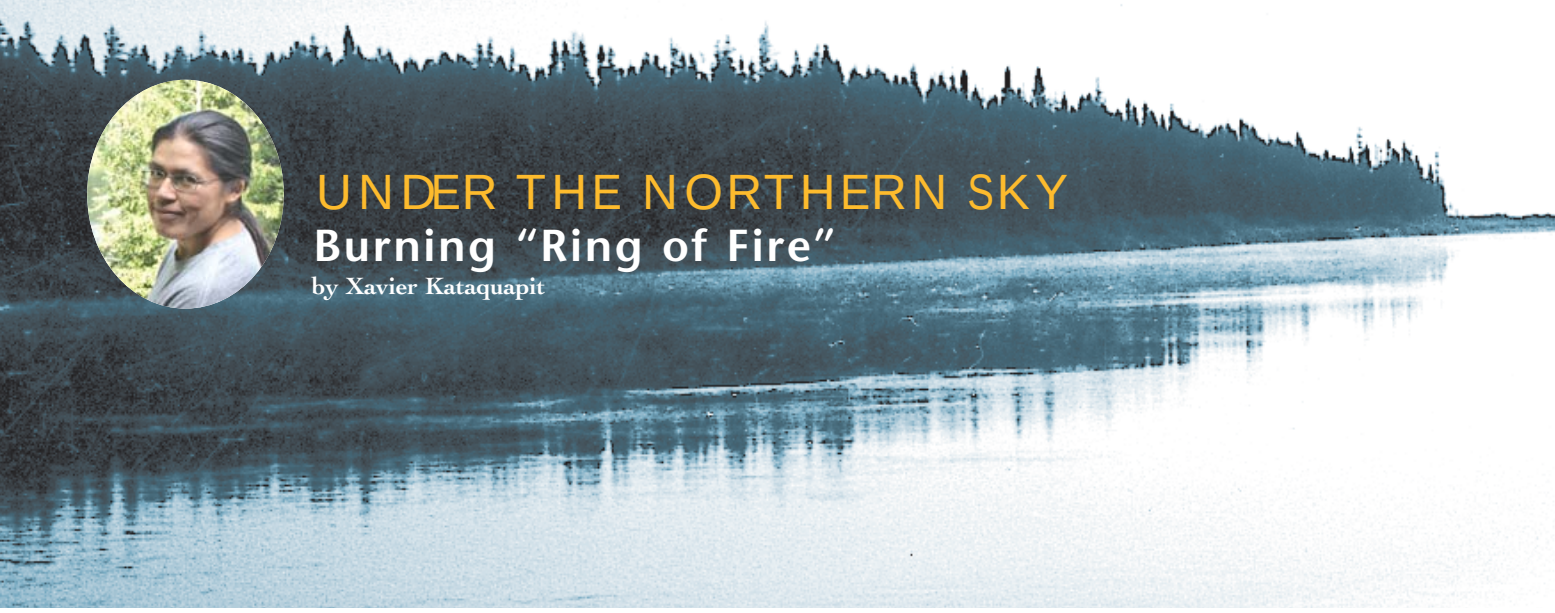
CHIBOUGAMAU EENOU FRIENDSHIP CENTRE
CENTRE D'AMITIÉ EENOU DE CHIBOUGAMAU
(CEFC/CAEC)

It's official:

the Cree Indian Centre will now be called the Chibougamau Eenou Friendship Centre/Centre d'amitié Eenou de Chibougamau (CEFC/CAEC)

The new name was put into practice during the 41st Annual General Meeting on Oct. 12, 2011 and community members welcomed the change with great enthusiasm.

The Centre's original name used for the past 40 years was considered outdated by most members. The new name which includes Eenou, the people, in Cree, is meant to better reflect the membership. The name change is part of the Board's action plan to modernize the Centre, its services and its governance.



UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

Burning "Ring of Fire"

by Xavier Kataquapit

My friends have always been amazed at the fact that I know the words to so many old country tunes. Well, I was brought up listening day and night to my parents' collection of country-music records and for better or worse they are etched in my memory banks forever. One tune in particular, "Ring of Fire", seems to have more meaning than most these days.

Of course, the "Ring of Fire" I am referring to has to do with the huge exploration and development of resources currently going on about 500 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay. This is a huge chunk of virgin wilderness that has been used traditionally by First Nations in that area. Right now, it seems as though just about everybody in the mining industry has some claim to a part of this promising bit of wilderness.

You might think that we could just take our time to develop the last remaining wilderness in this province but rabid industrial development knows no boundaries and has no respect for timing. If you look at the historical development of resources throughout the world you quickly learn that when there is something valuable on or in the land it is sought after and harvested with little attention to the people, animals and natural life that has existed there for centuries. That is just a fact of business.

In the case of the "Ring of Fire", we have the opportunity to do things differently. We have the chance to develop this huge area of resource rich land in a way that benefits the First Nations who have traditional ties to this place. We can also choose to do so in a cooperative manner that would make sure we protect the land and its animals as much as possible so that the environment is not devastated by our development of the resources. At the same time we have the ability to develop all the resources so that First Nations and industry can all benefit and proceed in a harmonious way. Those opportunities are there but it is up to our Native and non-Native leaders to figure out how to make it happen in a positive way.

It makes no sense to go to war and start huge conflicts merely for the almighty dollar in developing these pristine traditional lands. Nobody would really win in this scenario. However, make no mistake about it no matter what government is in place or how much money or power industry has, if fair deals are not made with the First Nations of the "Ring of Fire" nothing will ever be developed in this area. There will be a conflict that we will all have to endure for decades and we will waste a lot of energy, time and good will in a pointless fight.

Industry and government have people who are very good with numbers so you would think that they will quickly figure out that it is far better for them to give up a piece of their pie to make sure that development happens in a good way and that First Nations benefit from the mining, forestry and hydro projects that are going to be happening in North Ontario.

The days of pushing First Nations around, ignoring them and taking advantage of them is over. Those days are gone. Most resource industry people understand that and many new initiatives all over the country are happening in a way that everyone is benefiting and good resource development projects are going ahead. However, there are still some neanderthals in the business world that are holding on to outdated and nasty racist and colonial ways of seeing things. Time to get rid of them because if you don't, the projects they are in charge of will never move ahead.

People like Shawn Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council, has been working with his chiefs for years in developing all types of agreements with resource development companies that benefit all parties involved. I have seen many great projects proceed in the Wabun lands that prove good things can happen when there is a will to work together. I also see developments in the "Ring of Fire" as with the newly developed office by Ontario's Ministry of Northern Development Mines and Forestry dedicated to making things happen in a positive way and helping the stakeholders work together. If things go well then the "Ring of Fire" will burn in a good way and offer us some light in this huge development. However, if we don't want to work together remember the words to Johnny Cash's song: "I fell in to a burning ring of fire. I went down, down, down and the flames they got higher. And it burns, burns, burns the Ring of Fire, the Ring of Fire".

CLASSIFIEDS

BIRTHDAYS –101

Belated birthday greetings to our sons/brothers on September 8th, 2011: Ethan-Robert celebrated his 11th birthday on September 29th, our baby Jeremiah-Lazarus celebrated his 3rd birthday on October 18th and Tommy celebrated his 6th birthday!! With all our love from DAD, MOM & Brother Richard (Ojay)

Birthday wishes going to miss Serena Bosum-Longchap on October 17th, 2011. Hope u have a wonderful day! Happy 12th birthday from your cousins Ethan-Robert, Richard, Tommy & Jeremiah-Lazarus Dixon

Happy 12th birthday to our son Marcus Menarick on October 11th, 2011. One more year Marcus and you'll be a teenager eee! We miss your bugginess. LOL Take care and be good! Love you always, Mom and Dad.

HAPPY BELATED BIRTHDAY TO MY BABIES; CRYSTAL HEAVEN on October 9th & LEONIDAS ALEXANDER D. on October 16th, 2011. Both of you are my daily motivation, my cover from the storm, and my "everything good". Mommy loves you both very much! (Faith Gilpin)

ANNIVERSARIES – 103

I just wanna wish my parents, Juliana Matoush-Snowboy and Harry Snowboy, a happy 2? Wedding anniversary on October 11th, 2011! From, all of us kids: Vanessa, Viviane, Baboulous and Keeks. xO

WANTED

We are looking for stories about strange sightings in the James Bay area. If you have any or know anyone who does, please contact us at Km509@rezolutionpictures.com

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Where to get help: bilingual, anonymous, confidential and free phone services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Missing Children's Network: They'll help you find kids who have run away or disappeared. 514-843-4333.

Kid's Help Phone Line: 1-800-668-6868 (www.kidshelpphone.ca)

Youth helpline: 1-800-263-2266 (www.teljeunes.com)

Parent helpline: 1-800-361-5085 (www.parenthelpline.ca)

Drugs: help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 (www.drogue-aidereference.qc.ca)

Gambling: help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 (www.info-reference.qc.ca)

S.O.S. Conjugal Violence: 1-800-363-9010 (www.sosviolenceconjugale.com)

Health and Sexuality resources center: 1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm) (www.criss.org)

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688. (www.nwsm.info)

Residential School Survivors: A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources.html

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QUÉBEC PUBLIC SERVICE

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If you want to enrich your career, write your next professional chapter with us. While taking care of our communities with our multidisciplinary teams, you will have the chance to hone your skills, develop your knowledge and build yourself a solid future. We are currently seeking a :

Head of Current Services and Chishaayiyuu
Waskaganish

You will contribute to the improvement of the health and well-being of individuals, families and different populations of the community. You will also ensure the leadership and management of current services and the Chishaayiyuu Miyupimaatisiiun for the Community Miyupimaatisiiun Centre.

Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in Nursing
- Member of Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec (OIIQ)
- 2 years experience in program/team leadership or management in a community current services setting
- 5 years experience in emergency, home care, chronic disease, rehabilitation, acute or current services clinical nursing prior to experience in health program leadership OR registered nurse and 8 years experience in coordination of supervision of services OR registered nurse and 10 years experience in clinical settings in various fields OR equivalent education and experience

Apply today at **jobs.reg18@ssss.gouv.qc.ca**.

Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James
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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay